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ABSTRACT

The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges' Basic Agenda for 1986 is presented. The Board's basic agenda is a proposed public policy statement that identifies major goals and policy-making activities which the state and the community colleges should initiate or complete during 1986. Five objectives are presented which establish the larger context for community college reform: excellence, mission, finance, governance, and accountability. Goals are identified for each of these areas, including the following: (1) promote excellence in community college programs, services, and employees through the joint efforts of the state and the community college system; (2) clarify and fulfill the mission of community colleges by fully assisting the state's effort to review the mission and by acting to assure access to and success in postsecondary education among all student groups; (3) secure adequate, stable, predictable, and equitable funding for community colleges for 1986-87 and for the long-term; (4) clarify and improve the governance structure for community colleges; and (5) improve state and local accountability for the effectiveness and efficiency of community colleges, with particular focus on improving systemwide accountability functions administered by the Board of Governors. A discussion and a series of recommendations accompany each goal statement. (LAL)

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Board of Governors of the
California Community Colleges
December 5-6, 1985

Item 11

Title: The 1986 Basic Agenda

Staff Presentation: Joshua L. Smith, Chancellor

Summary

This item presents the Board of Governors' Basic Agenda for 1986, a proposed public policy agenda for California's community colleges that identifies major goals and policymaking activities which the State and community colleges should initiate or complete during 1986.

The 1986 Basic Agenda results from nearly six months of extensive consultation and analysis. In early October a draft of the document was circulated for review and comment to district governing boards, State officials, and community college educators. Three hearings were held during October and November. Finally, the Steering Committee met on November 13 to discuss recommended changes to this document.

Recommended action

The Board of Governors should adopt the 1986 Basic Agenda as set forth commencing on page 1.

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1986 BASIC AGENDA
of the
Board of Governors of the
California Community Colleges

Through its Basic Agenda, the Board of Governors annually offers its best judgment about the larger context for specific community college issues, as well as its best judgment about policymaking that should proceed to address these issues. It encourages concerted action by recommending the respective roles of the State (the Governor and the Legislature) and community college system (the Board of Governors and district governing boards) in developing the policies, and by recommending an order or sequence for these reforms.

For its 1986 Basic Agenda, the Board, after extensive consultation and analysis, has identified five objectives which establish the larger context for community college reform: excellence, mission, finance, governance and accountability.[1] Goals and specific recommendations are identified for each of these objectives and, taken together, constitute the Basic Agenda for 1986.

1. EXCELLENCE

Goal

Promote excellence in community college programs, services and employees through the joint effort of the State and the community college system.

Excellence in programs, services and employees is a goal that must be actively pursued even while the community college mission is under review. Neither the nation nor the state can afford to wait to improve the quality of its schools and colleges.

Excellence is achieved through the joint and continuous effort of the State and its community college system. The system's role is to establish benchmarks or standards of excellence, to evaluate progress against those standards, and to respond when improvements are needed. Within the system, district governing boards, together with their faculties, administrators and support personnel, have the greatest responsibilities for achieving excellence. It is particularly the faculty, in the final analysis, who must assume major responsibility for improving the quality of community college education.

The role of the State in promoting excellence is to assess whether the system has set reasonable benchmarks, whether progress is being made with regard to the benchmarks, whether the system needs additional direction, and, finally, to allocate available resources to meet the fiscal requirements of achieving and maintaining excellence.

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[1] Appendix A, entitled "The Context for Reform," summarizes the results of Board consultation and analysis to develop the 1986 Basic Agenda. The document also amplifies conclusions and recommendations made in the text of the Basic Agenda.

Recommendations

The Board of Governors recommends the following initiatives to improve the excellence of community college programs, services and employees:

1. The system should continue its renewal of the curriculum through local district assessment of curriculum priorities in the humanities, arts, math and sciences; and through the development of clearly and publicly stated high expectations of performance for students.

2. The system should develop, analyze and discuss reforms on employment issues, resulting in recommendations of the Board of Governors to be introduced in legislation.

3. The Board of Governors will encourage the institution of regular intersegmental planning, policymaking and budgeting efforts, on a voluntary basis, among the University of California, the California State University, the Postsecondary Education Commission and the Department of Education.

4. The State should provide authority and funding for the systemwide implementation of a student assessment and follow-up reform (matriculation) based upon the model developed by the Board of Governors.

5. The State should provide authority and funding, as recommended in the Board's 1986-87 Budget, for a joint effort between the community colleges and secondary schools to improve the college preparation of high school students.

6. The State should provide authority and funding, as recommended in the Board's 1986-87 Budget, for a systemwide effort to provide staff development and renewal.

2. MISSION

Goal

Clarify and fulfill the mission of community colleges by fully assisting the State's effort to review the mission, and by acting to assure access to and success in postsecondary education among all student groups.

The community college mission is under review by the State and may be changed within the next few years. The system has a responsibility to fully assist the State's review, and the Board of Governors is making a major commitment to discern and represent the views of the system. A significant part of this effort is to provide an accurate and up-to-date portrayal of the colleges, and to describe the economic and social impact their programs and services are having. As an outcome of the review, the responsibility of the State will be to broadly define the mission of the community colleges, and then to subsequently review and guide efforts of the system to deliver the mission. The responsibility of the system will

be to establish clear priorities within the mission, and to regularly monitor and evaluate efforts to achieve the mission.

Under current policy, the State has established its community colleges as open-door institutions, authorizing the Associate degree, transfer and vocational courses, general or liberal arts courses and community services to high school graduates or persons over 18 who are capable of profiting from instruction. Given this mission, California's community colleges have provided unparalleled access to public higher education during the past 25 years. California has led the way in educating minorities, the disabled, and other nontraditional students.

Current Board policy, as expressed in its systemwide mission statement, recognizes that providing educational opportunity for postsecondary education requires much more than simply promoting the open-door policy. Access to postsecondary education only becomes meaningful in the context of quality programs and a commitment on the part of the student and the college to achieve success. Students must be challenged by clear and high expectations of performance, be served by quality offerings, and be held accountable for demonstrating the capacity and motivation to benefit from instruction. Under these conditions, students undertake instruction with the "right to succeed," thus obligating each college to use its full resources to help realize the maximum potential of such students.

Enrollments of certain minority and other underrepresented groups have decreased significantly and disproportionately within recent years. The causes for this enrollment decline, which is also occurring elsewhere throughout the nation, must be identified and understood. The Board of Governors has conducted a symposium for this purpose, and recommendations will be made so that the State and system can take prompt action to enhance the enrollment and retention of minorities.

Recommendations

The Board of Governors recommends the following initiatives to fulfill the system's current mission and to assist the State in its review of that mission:

1. The system, through efforts coordinated by the Board of Governors, should assist the review of the Master Plan for Higher Education by both the Master Plan Commission and the Joint Legislative Committee.

2. The system, through efforts coordinated by the Board of Governors, should define and communicate the significant role that community colleges play in the economic and social development of California.

3. The State and system, consistent with recommendations of the Board of Governors, should undertake actions to enhance the recruitment and retention of minorities and other underrepresented groups.

3. FINANCE

Goal

Secure adequate, stable, predictable and equitable funding for community colleges -- both for 1986-87 as well as for the long term.

Community colleges require adequate resources to deliver their mission with excellence and accountability. The role of the State in financing community colleges is to establish the broad mechanism or procedure for determining revenue needs and allocating revenues, to fund this mechanism or funding commitment to the maximum extent possible, and to provide colleges with adequate lead time and flexibility in the event of changes in the mechanism or reductions to the funding commitment. The role of the system is to, within the mechanism or procedure established by the State, determine the resource needs of the colleges to deliver the mission with excellence and accountability, to allocate revenues within the system, and to provide accountability regarding the allocation of revenues.

Because the finance mechanism funds the mission, the mechanism cannot be fully determined until after review of the mission is complete. The system, however, requires lead time to plan for and implement the new finance mechanism which will replace the current mechanism that expires on July 1, 1987. The State must balance these competing needs. To adopt a finance mechanism in the absence of certainty about the mission means the mechanism may require revision. To adopt a mechanism without adequate lead time means that accountability and excellence are likely to suffer.

Recommendations

The Board of Governors recommends the following initiatives to provide adequate, stable, predictable and equitable funding for community colleges:

1. For 1986-87, the State should fund the community colleges in accordance with recommendations contained in the Board of Governors proposed budget for 1986-87.

2. During 1986, the State should enact a new community college finance mechanism, to be effective July 1, 1987, and to be based upon principles of finance adopted by the Board of Governors, in consultation with community college and State officials.

3. During 1987 and beyond, the State should consider additional adjustments to the community college finance mechanism which may be necessary to reflect adopted changes in the mission of community colleges; and any such changes in the mechanism should be accompanied by adequate lead time to enable the system to respond.

4. GOVERNANCE

Goal

Clarify and improve the governance structure for community colleges by recognizing and enabling governance by the community college educational system.

The governance structure for community colleges is undergoing a long and difficult evolution, a metamorphosis that began in 1960, when the Master Plan for Higher Education first established junior colleges as a segment of postsecondary education. The severance of community colleges from secondary education -- in mission, governance structures and financing methods -- is still far from complete, even in 1985. While the Legislature has manifested a long-standing intent that the community colleges should be established as a separate system of postsecondary education, with governance provided by local boards and the Board of Governors, this intent has never been made a reality.

The governance structure for community colleges should provide the powers, duties and decisionmaking structures necessary to deliver the mission with excellence and accountability. Within this context, governance responsibilities can most simply and directly be delineated in terms of the State's role and the system's role. The State, which essentially consists of the Legislature and Governor, retains plenary control, but should focus on the following: deciding the broad mission of community colleges; expressing broad expectations to the system; indicating generally how the system should interact with the other segments of education; determining the broad finance mechanism for the system; and appropriating revenues to the system. The system, which consists of the local districts and the Board of Governors, is one of shared governance. The Board's primary roles are to provide leadership, direction, and oversight for the system and to represent the system to the State. The primary role of districts is to operate the colleges -- to be primarily responsible to their communities and the Board of Governors for providing the mission, governance, excellence and accountability of these institutions.

The Board of Governors and the California Community College Trustees, through a Joint Governance Commission, have been working since early 1984 to develop recommendations to improve the governance structure. The report of the Commission should be issued late in 1985 or early in 1986, and should provide additional clarification and recommendations regarding governance by the community college system.

Recommendations

The Board of Governors recommends the following initiatives to clarify and improve the governance structure of community colleges:

1. The Board of Governors will adopt processes for consultation and communication with local districts in the development of systemwide

policies adopted or administered by the Board, including consultative processes for Board recommendations to the State regarding changes in State policy.

2. The Board of Governors, in consultation with both the community colleges and the State, will conduct a review of the Education Code with the aim of identifying revisions to clarify governance and to provide a governance structure which is both postsecondary and collegial in nature. The review will be completed during 1986, with legislation being introduced in 1987.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY

Goal

Improve state and local accountability for the effectiveness and efficiency of community colleges, with particular focus on improving system-wide accountability functions administered by the Board of Governors.

Across the country, institutions of higher education are increasingly being asked by state and local officials, as well as by the general public, to demonstrate that they are delivering their mission effectively and efficiently. California's community colleges, since the passage of Proposition 13, are especially being asked to be accountable at the state level. Establishing state-level accountability has been problematic, however, because the mission is not clear, governance responsibilities are confused, and the State has not generally accepted the responsibility for funding the accountability mechanisms it imposes.

The role of the State should be to broadly define the mission, governance structure and finance mechanism for the system; and then to charge the system with developing the specific mechanisms and processes that will provide state-level accountability regarding these pronouncements. The system's structures should, in turn, be subject to continuing state-level review, be flexible enough to adapt to changing accountability needs, and be adequately funded.

Recommendations

The Board of Governors recommends the following initiatives to improve state and local accountability for community colleges:

1. The Board of Governors will continue to implement a structure of adaptable state-level accountability mechanisms for the system, including comprehensive planning and evaluation, strengthened linkages with the regional accreditation process, coordinated compliance mechanisms, and policy for the system's responsibility in responding to districts in fiscal distress.

2. The Board of Governors will continue to improve the effectiveness of Chancellor's Office operations through changes in management and

organization; and, in connection with recommended changes in governance, will develop a proposal for the Chancellor's Office to have a structure of employment and civil service that better reflects the Board's role as part of the community college educational system.

3. The system, with coordination from the Board of Governors, should work to enhance the understanding of the roles and missions of community colleges by those who work in or attend them, by the general public, and by civic and governmental leaders.

4. The State should fund improvements to the statewide information system for community colleges, resulting in full implementation within three years, in accordance with recommendations of the Board of Governors.

5. The State should fund 1986-87 Budget proposals of the Board of Governors for additional resources to enable the agency to meet its assigned and emerging responsibilities.

Appendix A
The Context for Reform*

A. COMMUNITY COLLEGE REFORM IN PERSPECTIVE

In developing the 1986 Basic Agenda, the Board of Governors finds that five factors which provide a broad perspective for community college reform during the next few years:

First, the current analysis and scrutiny of California's community colleges is part of a larger reform movement for education (from kindergarten to medical school) which is occurring nationally.

A primary focus regarding undergraduate education reform is the issue of quality. There are concerns about the loss of integrity in the curriculum, the decline in student involvement, and lowered standards and expectations. In addition, significant attention is also being directed to finance, accountability, and governance of higher education. Across the nation, concerns are being raised about enrollment-driven funding, the lack of standards ("benchmarks") or processes for evaluating how well colleges are performing, and the role of state government in dictating the operations of its colleges.

America's community colleges are focusing not only on these issues, but also the preeminent issue of mission. Great tension has developed between the open-access mission and the demands for quality; and most states, like California, have not yet resolved this tension.

Second, California's community colleges have both initiated and accepted reform in many ways since Proposition 13.

Strengthened grading policies, graduation requirements, and standards for Associate degree credit have been developed; state support for recreational or avocational courses has been eliminated; a new structure of student fees has been enacted; new attention is being directed to the

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* In developing the 1986 Basic Agenda, the Board of Governors has begun with the analysis and recommendations contained in its 1985 Basic Agenda, and has attempted to build upon that work through extensive consultation and analysis. The 1985 Basic Agenda provides a comprehensive, 80-page analysis of some 33 critical issues facing community colleges. This document details what has been done, is being done, and remains to be done to bring about community college renewal and reform. For 1986, each of these issues was updated in light of recent policies and activities of the Legislature, the Board of Governors and districts. Also, to provide a better perspective, an attempt was made to relate these issues to national efforts to reform higher education and the community colleges. The Board has also undertaken extensive consultation regarding the appropriateness of these issues and its earlier analysis. The results of this effort are reflected in this document, "The Context for Reform."

transfer function; use of part-time instructors has been limited; and an effort to provide improved student assessment and feedback (matriculation) has been proposed, but remains unfunded.

Third, California's community college reform movement has been characterized by narrow, issue-specific policies and piecemeal remedies that have been legislatively derived and inadequately funded; and this approach has probably cost the system its undisputed leadership of community colleges in America.

There is a lack of understanding or discipline about the appropriate role of the State (Legislature and Governor) in determining community college policy. This lack of understanding or discipline exists among some of those who resort to the legislative arena, as well as by some of those who make legislative policy. In all levels of state policymaking there has been a general failure to integrate policies into a coherent package, a failure to be thoughtful about the respective roles of the State and the community colleges in setting policy, and a failure to deal with reforms in some orderly sequence. The general failure to provide clear, coherent, fiscally-backed policy at the state level has thwarted local efforts to be responsive.

Fourth, unless policymakers (as well as those who resort to them) decide otherwise, there is a great likelihood that legislatively-derived, narrow, issue-specific policymaking will continue to be the order of the day.

There are many efforts underway (or recently completed) to analyze and develop policy for the community colleges, including the Commission to Review the Master Plan, the Joint Legislative Committee to Review the Master Plan, the Little Hoover Commission, the California Roundtable, (Berman, Weiler) study of community colleges, and numerous, more specific legislatively-required studies. There are also pressures to make decisions because the finance mechanism and student fee structure are due to sunset on July 1, 1987 and January 1, 1988, respectively. Conditions are ripe for 1986 to be a year in which countless recommendations emerge for reforming community colleges, and most of these recommendations will emerge through the legislative arena.

Fifth, if California's community colleges are to regain their national preeminence, specific issues must be analyzed and placed in larger contexts, and recommended solutions must be interrelated into a coherent package of reforms which can be carried out through concerted action of the State and the community college system.

Concerted action must be achieved by delineating the respective roles of the State and the system in developing the policies, and by arriving at an order or sequence for these reforms.

Through its Basic Agenda, the Board of Governors offers its best judgment about the larger context for specific issues, as well as its best judgment about policymaking that should proceed to address these issues. It encourages concerted action by recommending the respective roles of the

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State (the Governor and the Legislature) and community college system (the Board of Governors and district governing boards) in developing the policies, and by recommending an order or sequence for these reforms.

B. THE LARGER CONTEXT FOR REFORM

After extensive analysis, the Board finds that all areas of concern and specific issues regarding community colleges are reducible to five objectives for reform:

1. Mission: What programs should community colleges offer and which students should they serve?

2. Governance: What powers, duties and decisionmaking structures are necessary to deliver the mission with excellence and accountability?

3. Excellence: How can community colleges improve the programs and services they offer?

4. Accountability: How can state and local officials, as well as the general public, be assured that community colleges are delivering the mission effectively and efficiently?

5. Finance: What resources do community colleges need to deliver their mission with excellence and accountability, through established governance structures?

If reform is to be approached rationally, it is apparent that the mission must be relatively clear before definitive reforms can be enacted to meet the objectives of governance, accountability, excellence and finance. Reforms for excellence in programs and services that are highly likely to remain part of the mission can be enacted before the mission is defined; but governance responsibilities, accountability processes, and finance mechanisms must be shaped around the mission. Similarly, accountability processes and finance mechanisms must also take the governance structure into account.

As will become clear in the next section, conditions in California will probably require a departure from a purely rational approach to reform; instead, certain reforms will need to be dealt with out of sequence.

In order to determine the reforms which are best for California, and to thereby develop a Basic Agenda, it is necessary to understand the current conditions within the State and nation surrounding each of these five objectives.

C. THE CURRENT CONTEXT FOR SPECIFIC REFORMS

1. Excellence

Focus on the quality of undergraduate education in America has recently intensified, as evidenced by the release of such reports as Integrity in the College Curriculum (Association of American

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Colleges); Involvement in Learning: Realizing the Potential of American Higher Education (the Study Group); and To Reclaim a Legacy: Report on Humanities in Education (William J. Bennett). These reports find that undergraduate degrees have become devalued, that the curriculum is disjointed and fragmented, that colleges don't clearly articulate what they want their graduates to learn, that there has been a dramatic decline in humanities offerings and a sharp increase in occupational and technical offerings, that those who teach at the college level receive little or no training, and, that faculty members lack leadership in the area of curricular reform.

Recommendations to respond to these concerns include: 1) establishing high expectations of students which are clearly and publicly expressed, as well as maintained, 2) providing regular and periodic assessment and feedback to students, and providing such information as well as to faculty and administrators, 3) challenging faculty members and administrators to assume the leadership in developing high standards and a coherent and unified curriculum, and 4) rewarding good teaching. The recommendations also recognize that the responsibility for defining specific standards of content and levels of student performance must fall on the colleges themselves, and specifically the faculty, or the standards will have no credibility.

The Board of Governors believes that excellence in the community colleges can best be promoted through the joint effort of the State and its community college system. Within the system, the Board is committed to continuously collaborate with districts to maintain and promote excellence. The Board recognizes that within the system district governing boards, together with their faculties, administrators and support personnel, have the greatest responsibilities for achieving excellence; and the already extensive activities of individual districts should be acknowledged and encouraged whenever appropriate. In addition, the Board of Governors has a responsibility to promote excellence at the systemwide level by working in close coordination with districts to lead and direct efforts to address system and State priorities for excellence.

Within California, several systemwide reforms to improve the quality of community college programs and services have been adopted during recent years. Stronger and more uniform systemwide standards for grading, probation and dismissal were adopted by the Board of Governors in 1980. Strengthened graduation requirements, and particularly general education requirements, were adopted in 1982. Systemwide requirements regarding counseling services were adopted in 1983. An intersegmental effort to establish transfer centers was funded in 1985; and in 1984 and 1985, both the Board of Governors and the Postsecondary Education Commission adopted plans for improving the community college transfer function. Also in 1984, the Board adopted a plan to improve vocational education and established the function as a priority for emphasis within local districts. In 1985, the Board adopted standards to increase the rigor of Associate degree credit offerings. Also in 1985, the Board defined remediation and established levels of course offerings which could count

towards the Associate degree. All of these Board actions required districts to respond by developing their own more specific standards.

During 1984, and again in 1985, the Board sponsored legislation and sought funding for a matriculation reform. This reform is aimed at augmenting and realigning student support services so that students declare educational goals; receive assessment, counseling, and periodic feedback; and demonstrate progress toward their goals.

During the past few years, the Board has been more active in encouraging and leading the ongoing efforts of districts to renew the community college curriculum. In 1984, the Board established the transfer and vocational education functions as "priorities for emphasis," by asking the colleges to place special attention on reviewing and improving these programs. In 1985, the Board again encouraged focus on transfer and vocational education by refining systemwide plans and securing additional fiscal support for these priorities.

For 1986, the Board is asking districts to continue curriculum renewal through focus on the humanities, arts, math and sciences. Across the nation, two- and four-year colleges have witnessed declining enrollments in the humanities and arts, as well as a declining emphasis on the math and sciences curriculum. California's community colleges should consider the implications of these declines and determine whether curriculum priorities should be readjusted.

Within recent years, there has been an increase in intersegmental planning and budgeting, as witnessed by the transfer center initiative and joint activities on articulation. These ad-hoc projects and activities should be incorporated into regular processes for intersegmental planning and budgeting.

Very little reform in the area of employees and employee renewal has been accomplished. Resources are needed for staff development and training, but, at the same time, significant issues persist regarding the use of part-time instructors, probationary periods, tenure, collective bargaining, affirmative action, faculty governance, evaluation, salaries, and administrative staff.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it must be recognized that the years of substantial underfunding since Proposition 13 have jeopardized the ability of community colleges to maintain excellent programs and services. Reductions have been forced in critical support and infrastructure areas such as counseling and assessment, staff development, facility maintenance, equipment replacement, articulation, program review, and research and planning. Excellence is pursued not only through seeking new ways of doing better, but also through maintaining that which is excellent; and, in both of these pursuits, excellence is ultimately dependent upon adequate resources.

2. Mission

The 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education broadly defined the programmatic mission and general admission criteria for each segment. Community colleges were assigned the responsibility to provide instruction through but not beyond the second year of college -- a mission which includes transfer, vocational and technical education, general or liberal arts courses and community services.

Community colleges were also assigned the responsibility to provide open admissions to public higher education in California. While the other segments were assigned restrictive admission policies, the community colleges were directed to admit all high school diploma holders as well as anyone else over 18 who could profit from instruction. The framers of the Master Plan recognized the significant social and economic impact, both to the student and the State, that a postsecondary education could have. Implementing this vision, California led the nation in instituting the "open door" concept.

Within two decades, increasing questions began to be raised about the mission of community colleges, both within California and throughout the nation. By 1984, the State decided to review the mission, along with the rest of the Master Plan for Higher Education.

In reviewing the community college mission, it will be essential to distinguish between problems that have occurred because the stated mission is inappropriate, and problems that have occurred for other reasons. Problems in accountability, finance, governance and quality often appear to be problems with the mission; but this is frequently not the case.

Community colleges have grown rapidly. Until recently, little state-level attention has been paid to methods of describing what community colleges do and how successful they are at doing it. The current statewide information system is in its infancy in accurately portraying the curriculum of community colleges. Statewide data is not regularly collected on a student's prior academic status and educational goal upon entry; nor is outcome data collected upon or after exit. Policymakers have become uneasy about the mission of community colleges when they can't be provided with answers about the programs community colleges are offering, the students community colleges are serving, and the outcomes of community college education. The problem may well be one addressed through improvements in accountability, rather than revisions to the mission.

Likewise, with respect to finance, the current ADA-based funding mechanism does not provide the State with a clear concept of what it is paying for. Also, when ADA funding was relatively unlimited, it caused policymakers to question the mission -- because of the expense of funding it. Again, the problem may not be with the mission, but rather with the mechanism that funds it.

Finally, with respect to quality, policymakers have become concerned about the lowering of standards and disintegration of the curriculum which seems to have accompanied open admissions. Concerns are raised about the decline in student involvement, the loss of rigor in course offerings, and the general loss of status as a collegiate institution. These factors cause some to conclude that admissions should be restricted or that the mission, particularly with respect to remediation, should be narrowed.

Instead of restricting admissions, the Board of Governors and the colleges have sought to implement improvements in quality. More rigorous standards for courses and Associate degree credit have been adopted; requirements for grading, probation, dismissal and graduation have been strengthened; improved assessment and feedback for student has been sought through matriculation; and improvements to the information system have been sought so that quality may be better measured and assessed.

Regarding remediation, the Board, in May of 1985, adopted major systemwide policy which: 1) declared that the sole purpose for providing remediation in the community colleges, when in the credit mode, is to assist students to attain those learning skills necessary to succeed in college transfer, certificate or degree courses and programs; 2) established a uniform systemwide definition of courses which are remedial; and 3) prohibited the awarding of degree-applicable credit for coursework at the remedial level. By late 1985, additional systemwide policies on remediation were circulated for comment, including proposals for mandatory assessment of skills at entrance; conditional access to degree and certificate courses, based on prerequisite skill levels; and tightening standards of progress from minimum GPA of 1.75 to a minimum GPA of 2.0.

An assessment of the current mission cannot occur absent an analysis of how problems in accountability, finance, governance, and quality have contributed to the erosion of confidence and lack of validation that led to the decision to review the mission. On the other hand, until the mission is validated or redefined, additional reforms in finance, governance, and accountability are problematic.

The position of the Board of Governors, as reflected in its statewide mission statement, is that the current mission of the colleges should, in large part, be validated by the State. Significant reforms in accountability, finance, governance and excellence should accompany this validation, however; and these reforms should occur through the concerted action of the State and the community college system.

Validation of the open door policy is profoundly important to the future of California and its people. However, open access to postsecondary education can only be meaningful in the context of quality programs and a commitment to student success. Students must be challenged by clear and high expectations of performance, be served by quality offerings, and be held accountable for demonstrating the

capacity and motivation to benefit from instruction. Under these conditions, students undertake instruction with the "right to succeed," thus obligating each college to use its full resources to help realize the maximum potential of each student.

In its 1985 Basic Agenda, the Board recognized the crucial role that student services play in making access meaningful. The significant retrenchment of such services during recent years has affected both student success and student accountability. In response, the Board is committed to develop recommendations for defining and revitalizing student services.

Finally, during the past four years -- as colleges have attempted to grapple with significant fiscal uncertainty, substantial underfunding, implementing a new structure of student fees, and significant media attention regarding their plight -- enrollments have declined substantially. Of particular concern is the disproportionate decline in enrollments and retention rates of Blacks and Hispanics, a phenomenon which is also occurring in other colleges throughout the country. The Board of Governors has taken action to discern the reasons for this decline, and has initiated proposals through its 1986-87 proposed budget for addressing this significant problem. This loss of access must be attended to immediately.

3. Finance

As previously stated, until the mission is validated or redefined, it is difficult to determine the appropriate finance mechanism for community colleges. On the other hand, the current finance mechanism (SB 851) expires on July 1, 1987, and the system will require adequate lead time to plan and respond. In fact, if there isn't a new finance mechanism in place by September of 1986, the Board of Governors cannot meet established deadlines for submitting to the Governor a proposed 1987-88 budget for the community colleges.

The issue of student fees further complicates the matter. The current fee structure (which includes the enrollment fee) is scheduled to expire on January 1, 1988, with a final study on impact of the fees to be submitted by July 1, 1987. If fees are eliminated, adequate lead time must be provided for the State to absorb the cost of providing replacement revenues; and if fees are increased, adequate lead time will be needed to secure additional student aid funds and to prepare for increased financial aid delivery.

The Board of Governors attempted to respond to these difficult finance issues through two principal efforts: development of its proposed 1986-87 statewide budget for community colleges, and development of a new finance mechanism to replace SB 851. The Board's 1986-87 proposed budget for community colleges would, among other things: 1) fully fund the current finance mechanism (SB 851); 2) provide resources to rebuild the community college infrastructure through a deferred maintenance program, and an equipment renewal and

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replacement program; 3) seek quality improvements through a proposal for matriculation, and a proposal for staff renewal and development; and 4) fulfill the current mission by proposals to restore access to minorities and other underrepresented groups and to improve the preparation of high school students for community college education.

Efforts to develop the new finance mechanism were begun in mid 1985, with the development of finance principles. These principles, adopted in December 1985, provide in pertinent part that: 1) the community college funding mechanism should be reflective of the postsecondary nature of community colleges; 2) the Board of Governors should be given the authority to adopt the specific funding mechanism and workload measures; 3) the finance mechanism should be cost-based, including such categories as instruction, instructional support, operations and maintenance, and student services; 4) as programmatic needs change and as the numbers of students decrease or increase, districts must have adequate lead time to adjust programs or reduce expenditures; and 5) the funding mechanisms should include a provision to encourage the quality and effectiveness of educational programs.

By late spring of 1986, it should become apparent whether the Commission to Review the Master Plan or the Joint Legislative Committee will be recommending major changes to the mission of community colleges. If major changes are not recommended, the Legislature should proceed with enactment of new finance mechanism during 1986. If major changes in mission are recommended, the remainder of the Master Plan review should be completed (March 1987) before any legislation is enacted. Some adjustment will be required to the expiration date (July 1, 1987) of the current mechanism, as well as some adjustment to the expiration date for the current fee structure (January 1, 1988) in order to provide adequate lead time at both the State and local levels.

Governance

The governance structure for community colleges should provide the powers, duties and decisionmaking structures necessary to deliver the mission with excellence and accountability. Governance, therefore, should not be fully delineated until the mission is known. On the other hand, attempting to conceive and implement major reforms for community colleges in the absence of a clear governance structure has complicated and will continue to complicate and undermine the potential success of reforms. For purposes of shaping and deciding reforms in mission, finance, excellence and accountability, it is critical that at least some minimal delineation of governance responsibilities be adhered to.

California's community colleges are "creatures of statute," and thereby remain under the plenary authority of the Legislature. The Legislature has chosen to establish local governing boards and a state board for community colleges. It has delegated various

powers and duties (with varying degrees of specificity) to these entities, and has reserved certain functions to itself.

Community colleges came from a K-12 structure of governance. This structure is one in which the Legislature speaks extensively, prescriptively, and directly to the local delivery entity (district boards). It is also a structure in which the Legislature speaks extensively, prescriptively and directly to the State governing board. Consequently, it is a system of "shared governance" in which state and local boards carry out specific functions. Because the Legislature delegates powers and duties with narrowness and specificity (rather than through broad grants of authority), adjustments to the structure are constantly being brought back to the Legislature. It is a structure characterized by an extensive body of statute (over 3000 provisions in the Education Code alone).

Contrasted with the K-12 structure of governance is the postsecondary structure. In a postsecondary structure of governance, the Legislature speaks more exclusively to the systemwide governing board. It delegates broad authority to the systemwide governing board, and does much less to specify the powers and duties of the local delivery entity (when the Legislature delegates major authority to a state governing board and is silent on the authority of the local delivery entity, such structures are sometimes referred to as "state-controlled systems"). In a postsecondary system, the Legislature dictates fewer policies regarding the system because it has delegated away authority to the system. The Legislature retains plenary authority to make changes, but generally confines its role to deciding the broad mission of the colleges, expressing broad expectations about the system to the State governing board, indicating generally how the system should interact with the other segments of education, and allocating revenues to the system. In sum, the major powers and duties for administration of the system are vested in a single body which, in turn, is accountable to the Legislature.

The governance structure for California's community colleges is a relatively ineffectual and confusing hybrid of K-12 and postsecondary structures. Until 1967, the governance structure was very much K-12 in nature. In 1967 and 1969, the Legislature created the Board of Governors and delineated the major responsibilities of both the Board and local governing boards. The basic intent of this legislation was to establish a separate system of postsecondary education, with governance provided by local boards and the Board of Governors. Unfortunately, the Legislature simply superimposed this postsecondary structure over the highly detailed and specific K-12 structure. The result is that the current governance structure, as expressed in statute, is full of contradictions. Neither the authority to govern nor lines of accountability are clear.

Problems with the governance structure worsened with the passage of Proposition 13. The State's larger fiscal commitment to community colleges prompted more interest in and questions about community colleges; and the Legislature expected the Board to respond as the

postsecondary governing board it created in 1967. With authority between itself and local boards both dispersed and confused, the Board of Governors could neither speak for nor control local districts. The result has been inevitable: key decisions affecting the administration and operation of the colleges have been made by the Legislature.

The community college governance structure must be clarified, but in the meantime, critical community college reforms must be shaped and responded to. The Legislature must have some governance structure or concept to apply as it considers and adopts reforms. Should it apply a K-12 concept and be highly prescriptive about both the responsibilities of both local boards as well as the Board of Governors? Or should it decide roles and responsibilities for reform consistent with the postsecondary structure of governance it created in 1967 and 1969, when it formed the Board of Governors?

The position of the Board of Governors is that a postsecondary structure of governance should be applied in shaping and deciding responsibilities for community college reforms. This structure reflects a greater concentration of authority in the Board of Governors, with the Legislature reserving less of the specifics to itself, and with districts retaining authority to operate the colleges. It is a governance structure in which responsibilities can most simply and directly be delineated in terms of the State's role and the system's role. The State, which essentially consists of the Legislature and Governor, retains plenary control, but should focus on the following: deciding the broad mission of community colleges; expressing broad expectations to the system; indicating generally how the system should interact with the other segments of education; determining the broad finance mechanism for the system; and allocating revenues to the system. The system, which consists of the local districts and the Board of Governors, is one of shared governance. The Board's primary roles are to provide leadership, direction, and oversight for the system and to represent the system before the State. The primary role of districts is to operate the colleges -- to be primarily responsible to their communities and the Board of Governors for providing the mission, governance, excellence and accountability of these institutions.

The Board of Governors and the California Community College Trustees, through a Joint Governance Commission, have been working since early 1984 to develop recommendations to improve the community college governance structure. The report of the Commission, which should be issued in late 1985 or early 1986, will provide the basis for additional improvements in governance.

Finally, it must be noted that while most efforts to improve governance have focused on state-level or systemwide decisionmaking, the governance structures at the districtwide and campus level are also vitally important. Each governing board should give careful

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consideration to the roles of faculty and students in educational decisionmaking, and these roles should be spelled out in official governing board policy.

5. Accountability

Across the country, institutions of higher education are increasingly being asked by state and local officials, as well as by the general public, to demonstrate that they are delivering their mission effectively and efficiently. California's community colleges, since the passage of Proposition 13, are especially being asked to be accountable at the state level. Establishing state-level accountability has been problematic, however, because the mission is not clear, governance responsibilities are confused, and the State has not generally accepted the responsibility for funding the accountability mechanisms it imposes.

The fact that the mission of community colleges evolved rapidly and is neither clear nor well understood has had major implications for state-level accountability. Traditional measures of accountability applied to four-year institutions don't readily apply, yet substitute measures haven't been developed. For instance, because excellence in higher education has traditionally been determined by the percentage of entering students who complete degrees, community colleges have been criticized for having large numbers of "noncompleters." This traditional measure is inappropriate for community colleges because many students enroll for a specific course or to learn leges because many students enroll for a specific course or to learn a specific skill. Consequently, the extent to which individual students meet their goals, and not the extent to which students graduate or transfer, should be the measure of excellence for community colleges.

Also, because community colleges are community-based institutions, their success cannot be evaluated on universal or common standards alone, but also must be assessed on how well each college achieves its stated missions and goals.

To understand how the confusion regarding governance complicates state-level accountability in the community colleges, it is necessary to focus on two questions: accountability to whom, and accountability for what? The current shared governance structure for community colleges implies that both the Board of Governors and local districts are accountable to the State (the Legislature and the Governor) for the performance of their respective statutory functions. The Legislature has created the Board of Governors as a state agency and charged it with performing extensive and specific duties. The Legislature has also created community college districts and charged them with performing specific duties -- the most important of which is to establish and carry out their own specific mission.

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Problems with state-level accountability arise because it is impossible for 70 different districts to demonstrate to the Legislature that they are delivering their mission effectively and efficiently (or that they are otherwise carrying out their separately assigned functions). One would naturally think that the Board of Governors would provide this accountability, but the agency has neither been given the clear legal responsibility nor the resources; instead, the Board of Governors has been established and funded as a "state department." The Board has neither been charged with nor enabled to provide state-level accountability regarding functions which the shared governance structure assigns separately to local districts.

Increasingly since Proposition 13, the Board of Governors has realized that, despite statutory and resource constraints, it must assume primary responsibility for providing state-level accountability for community colleges. The agency is not simply a state department responsible for performing its own specific functions; it must also provide accountability to the state regarding functions which have separately been assigned to districts.

Since 1979, the Board of Governors has been attempting to implement a flexible structure for providing state-level accountability for community colleges. It has sought to expand the statewide data base by seeking improvements in the information system, particularly with respect to student outcome data (the proposed matriculation reform would also provide state-level accountability regarding student outcomes). It has implemented a comprehensive planning process to provide acountability on how well districts are meeting their mission, as well as how districts are responding to identified statewide priorities. It has sought to improve the evaluation of quality and excellence by strengthening the Board's coordination with the regional accreditation process. It has sought to provide better assurance of district compliance with state law by developing minimum standards for receipt of state aid, and by improving procedures for annual fiscal audits of districts.

Both the Legislature and district officials increasingly expect or acknowledge the Board's responsibility to provide state-level accountability regarding community colleges. If these expectations are to be met, however, the agency must be given clear authority and adequate resources to perform this role. The Chancellor's Office must be seen more as part of a community college educational institution and less as a bureau of state government; and the office must also be able to draw its staff not only from state civil service lists, but also from those who work in the colleges and other educational institutions.

During 1986, the Board of Governors will develop a proposal for the Chancellor's Office to have a system of employment and civil service that better reflects the Board's role as part of the community college educational system. To the extent that this proposal involves any departure from State civil service, appropriate protections for existing employees will be built in.

Under ideal circumstances the role of the State should be to broadly define the mission, governance structure and finance mechanism for the system; and then to charge the system with developing the specific mechanisms and processes that will provide state-level accountability regarding these pronouncements. The system's structures should, in turn, be subject to continuing state-level review, be flexible enough to adapt to changing accountability needs, and be adequately funded.

Final decisions about accountability structures cannot be made until both mission and governance have been clarified. Until this time, the State should exercise care and restraint in imposing its own specific accountability mechanisms.

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